

**West Seattle Triangle Advisory Group
Meeting Notes May 12, 2010
West Seattle Senior Center, 6:00 PM**

Summary Notes

Land Use Discussion

- The Triangle Planning Area is composed of an eclectic mix of uses ranging from large commercial uses to residential uses.
- Retaining existing locally-owned businesses should be a priority for planning.
- Any Code changes should also emphasize pedestrian-friendly designs and uses in the future.
- Future land use regulations should recognize the Triangle area at the hub of West Seattle's transit network.
- The City should be aware of incompatibilities between permitted uses, and impacts to surrounding neighborhood areas.
- The Triangle planning area should retain existing commercial capacity because there is relatively little commercially-zoned land available in West Seattle.

Arterial Streets Discussion

- Goals identified by members of the community for Fauntleroy Way SW include: improving the appearance of the arterial street as a Gateway to West Seattle, increase pedestrian safety while maintaining the street's function as a major arterial for vehicles.
- The existing configuration of Fauntleroy Way SW includes little parking and much unused/under-used pavement.
- In general, the idea of redesigning Fauntleroy with boulevard elements was well-received by those in attendance at the May 12 meeting.
- There are concerns that encouraging more consistent travel speeds along Fauntleroy could slow traffic and result in more traffic congestion. Other meeting attendees pointed-out that congestion currently results from volumes backing-up at key intersections, not travel speeds. Any street design would need to be modeled and approved Seattle Department of Transportation traffic engineers.
- The City should consider impacts to nearby rights-of-way when considering designs for Fauntleroy Way SW and SW Alaska Street.
- SW Alaska Street: the idea of retaining some parking along SW Alaska was well-received, and is important to the future success of businesses in the area. The concept that was discussed at the May 12 meeting would need to be approved by Seattle Department of Transportation traffic engineers. A recommendation from the Triangle planning process would be forwarded to King County Transportation for consideration.

- Ongoing maintenance of open space elements should be considered.

Advisory group members in attendance: Kandie Jennings, Nancy Folsom, Erica Karlovits, Sharonn Meeks, Susan Melrose, Patti Mullen, Brandon Nicholson, Denny Onslow, Chas Redmond, Josh Sutton.

Approximately 30 members of the public were in attendance.

Staff team members included: David Hewitt, Hewitt Architects; Casey Hildreth, Seattle Department of Transportation; Susan McLain, Seattle Department of Planning and Development (DPD); and Robert Scully, DPD.

Seattle Department of Planning and Development (DPD) planner Susan McLain welcomed the advisory group members and members of the community in attendance. She reviewed the project scope and outcomes, and announced upcoming meetings with Seattle Parks Department staff and Seattle Department of Transportation Parking group.

Taking Stock of Land Uses in the Triangle Planning Area

Robert Scully, DPD, presented a map depicting uses within the Triangle Planning Area. A version of the following table was presented. The table identifies uses in the Triangle Planning Area. Note that this data was updated after the May 12 meeting to correct some figures and align use categories with those identified by the Seattle Land Use Code. For information about certain use categories in the Code, see the “Additional Notes” document posted at the West Seattle Triangle web site: www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/WestSeattleTriangle/Background/.

It should also be noted that this data shows only the square feet by parcel. Some uses are within multi-story buildings. Therefore, the total square feet of those uses is much greater than the square feet identified within the following table.

Current Uses	Total Parcel Square Feet	Percentage of the Planning Area (excluding rights-of-way)
Un-leased Land	330,392	21.85%
Heavy Commercial Sales/Warehouse/ Outdoor Storage	188,742	12.40%
General Retail Sales and Services	188,217	12.45%
Community	178,473	11.81%
Residential—single purpose and mixed use	136,031	11.5%
Automotive Sales and Services	109,386	7.24%
Parks	108,128	7.15%
Restaurant & Entertainment	92,388	6.11%
Customer Service, Office, Medical Service	73,237	4.84%
Surface Parking	25,947	1.72%
Gas Station	23,089	1.53%
Government (not park)	21,239	1.40%
Total (Triangle + Study Area)=	1,511,813	100.00%

Susan McLain asked all meeting participants for their observations about the data. Comments included the following:

- It would be useful to identify the number of jobs that are associated with each use. Another advisor suggested also identifying the number of residents.
- Some uses are incompatible with other uses, such as manufacturing uses adjacent to residential uses. Other meeting participants noted that residential uses and higher-impact uses are interspersed throughout the planning area.
- Higher-impact uses appear to be located in the northeast portion of the planning area. This may help resolve potential incompatibilities in uses.
- There are a large number of drive-in uses in the Fauntleroy/Avalon area. These are not compatible with pedestrian activity.
- David Hewitt noted the diverse mix of uses within the Triangle planning area, and suggested the group look to the Pearl District as an example of an area that contains a range of uses within a successfully functioning neighborhood.
- Retaining existing commercial uses is important. Many of these are locally-owned businesses that employ people in well-paying jobs.
- The City Comprehensive Plan contains targets for increased density in neighborhood areas.

- A relatively small portion of the land in West Seattle is zoned for commercial uses.
- Susan McLain noted that the existing commercial zoned allows commercial-only, mixed-use and residential development.
- The City should create a map and do analysis of uses within the Triangle area only.
- Similarly, a pie chart should be created that identifies the percent of land in publicly-owned rights-of-way.
- There is tension for space in the Triangle for parking. We need to be creative with solutions to ease this problem.
- A woonerf approach to streets will not work for businesses in the Triangle. Another participant suggested this approach would work.
- The City should look at impacts to single family area when considering changes to the Triangle planning area.

Presentation by Casey Hildreth, Seattle Department of Transportation, Rapid Ride Context

Casey Hildreth, planner with Seattle Department of Transportation, outlined the route for RapidRide. He outlined preliminary (30% design) street designs, which includes removing parking from SW Alaska Street. He emphasized that this design is very preliminary, and the Triangle planning process has an opportunity to affect that design. He emphasized that King County is not planning to revisit the route alignment.

Casey and David Hewitt mentioned the benefits of RapidRide including, increased reliability, faster speeds, more amenities such as well-lit bus stops, easy on- and off, and generally more comfortably designed buses.

Comments from advisors included:

- Transit service between Delridge and WS Junction will help Delridge residents to access retail and services in the Junction.
- Chamber of Commerce will study potential impacts of SW Alaska St. on-street parking may be on Triangle businesses.
- Bulbs should not be used on SW Alaska St. since they will take away parking. (Bulbs are actually constructed in the 30 ft zone at intersections where parking is not allowed therefore will not take away parking spaces.)
- Will there be a new fire station? (No, past errors in planning/design has pushed replacement of station into the far future.

Presentation by Brandon Nicholson, NK Architects; and David Hewitt, Hewitt Architects

Brandon Nicholson led a discussion with advisors that interspersed information about a street design concept for Fauntleroy Way SW (developed by Mr. Nicholson and David Hewitt) with questions and discussion from advisors. This was followed by a concept for SW Alaska Street between SW 35th Street and Fauntleroy Way SW. Neither of these concepts has been reviewed by Seattle Department of Transportation or King County Transportation.

Key elements of the draft Design concept for Fauntleroy Way SW include:

- Boulevard elements including a center median that is landscaped, increased landscaping/trees along the edges of the street, better-defined travel lanes
- Better defined cross-walks and pedestrian amenities, including sidewalks
- Provide access north and south off- and onto Fauntleroy in a limited fashion consistent with existing travel patterns.
- Eliminate most parking. There is very little parking along the street currently.

Discussion about these two concepts included the following:

- Left turn off SW Fauntleroy Way (northbound) onto 38th Avenue SW to make left turn onto SW Oregon St. is possible. Provides access to residential area and future Fauntleroy Place development for traffic on SW Fauntleroy (northbound). Signal at 38th Avenue SW & SW Oregon Street will not happen since intersection is too close to SW Fauntleroy. Stop sign may be possible. Needs further study and engineering. Can't make left turn off of northbound SW Fauntleroy onto SW Oregon Street – too sharp (>90°) and traffic patterns won't allow it.
- Make Alaska Street a walk-able connection between the Triangle and the Junction.
- Who will maintain new green spaces suggested by this concept? Need to have a maintenance plan. Responsibility for maintenance should not be passed on to community organizations.
- Plaza and street closure at SW Fauntleroy and 39th Avenue SW could simplify intersection and will not impact parking on 39th. Retain angle parking on 39th Avenue SW.
- 37th Avenue SW has high traffic use. Drivers use 37th Avenue SW as an alternative to 35th Avenue SW.
- Don't hinder interim uses of properties and buildings. Consider amending regulations that may require owners to provide costly improvements in order to lease space for short term uses.

- Do not create streetscape features that will obstruct truck turning movements. Triangle streets have heavy truck use.
- Consider ferry traffic volumes along SW Fauntleroy. Not likely to go away.
- Bike lanes will be in the uphill direction on both SW Alaska Street and SW Avalon Street.
- There appear to be benefits to slowing traffic on SW Fauntleroy Way.

David Hewitt presented elements of the draft Design concept for SW Alaska Street that included:

- Retaining parking between Fauntleroy Way SW and SW 35th Street where traffic volumes are relatively low
- Install bus bulbs to allow buses to stop within the lane of travel
- A bus lane westbound
- Defined pedestrian crossing of SW Alaska Street
- Well-designed Bus RapidRide stops

Kandie Jennings shared a statement from a business group from within the Triangle area, entitled “Draft Vision for 10-15 years from now”. The vision statement includes the following:

The Triangle as a thriving Commercial Services Business District that welcomes & serves residents and other businesses from all over West Seattle and requiring: access to businesses, commercial zoning, and pedestrian safety. Outcome: keeps strong employers/jobs in West Seattle, compliments other zoning in the Junction and Residential areas, allows for change/evolution as community needs change.